

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) In a communications system, a push-to-talk communication device to participate in a group communication net, said communications system including a controller to manage said group communication net and interface with said push-to-talk communication device, said device comprising:

a processor to convert information signals into packet data suitable for transmission over ~~the Internet~~ a distributed network;

a transmitter to transmit packet data through a first channel to said controller over ~~the Internet~~ a distributed network;

a receiver to receive packet data through a second channel from said controller over ~~the Internet~~ a distributed network; and

a user-activated mechanism to activate said transmitter when a user of said communication device wishes to transmit said packet data to said controller.

2. (Previously Presented) The communication device of Claim 1, wherein said communication device is a wireless communication device.

3. (Previously Presented) The communication device of Claim 1, further comprising a memory unit to store said packet data until said controller is ready to receive said packet data.

4. (Previously Presented) The communication device of Claim 3, wherein said memory unit is used to minimize perceived latency of a user.

5. (Previously Presented) The communication device of Claim 1, wherein said communication device further comprises a dynamically configurable priority level, wherein said priority level determines whether said communication device has the authority to gain transmission privilege over another communication device such that said communication device may interrupt said another communication device having a lower priority level.

6. (Previously Presented) The communication device of Claim 5, wherein said priority level is dynamically configurable.

7. (Previously Presented) The communication device of Claim 1, wherein said communication device receives information from said controller regarding said group communications net.

8. (Previously Presented) The communication device of Claim 1, wherein said communication device operates in a secure mode.

9. (Previously Presented) The communication device of Claim 1, wherein said communication device further comprises identification information, and wherein said communication device updates its identification information when its current identification information has or is about to change, and transmits its new identification information to said controller.

10. (Previously Presented) The communication device of Claim 1, wherein said group communications net is capable of being in a dormant mode, and wherein activation of said user-activated mechanism prompts said controller to bring the group communications net out of said dormant mode.

11. (Currently Amended) In a communications system, an apparatus to adapt a communication device to participate in a group communication net, said communications system comprising at least two communication devices and having a controller to manage said group communication net and interface with said communication devices, said apparatus comprising:

a first port to establish a first channel with said controller over ~~the Internet~~ a distributed network;

a processor electrically connected to said first port, wherein said processor is dynamically configurable to send packet data through said first channel to said controller over ~~the Internet~~ a distributed network; and

a user-activated mechanism to allow a user of said communication device to transmit said packet data to said controller ~~over the Internet~~.

12. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein said packet data comprises time-sensitive information.

13. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein at least one of said communication devices is a wireless communication device.

14. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 11, further comprising a memory unit to store said packet data until said controller is ready to receive said packet data.

15. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 14, wherein said memory is used to minimize perceived latency of a user.

16. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein said packet data comprises at least one of identification data of said communication device, location data of said communication device, and control data to establish, modify, or terminate group communications.

17. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein said first channel further comprises a signal initiation protocol (SIP) channel, a media signaling channel, and a media traffic channel.

18. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein said communication device further comprises a priority level, wherein said priority level determines whether said communication device has the authority to gain transmission privilege over another communication device such that said communication device may interrupt said another communication device having a lower priority level.

19. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of Claim 18, wherein said priority level is dynamically configurable.

20. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein said communication device may operate in different communication infrastructures.

21. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein said processor receives information from said controller regarding said group communications net.

22. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein said communication device operates in a secure mode.

23. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein said processor further comprises identification information, and wherein said processor updates its identification information when its current identification information has or is about to change, and transmits its new identification information to said controller.

24. (Original) The apparatus of Claim 11, wherein said group communications net is capable of being in a dormant mode, and wherein activation of said user activated mechanism prompts said controller to bring the communications net out of said dormant mode.

25. (Currently Amended) In a communications system, a push-to-talk communication device to participate in a group communication net, said communications system including a controller to manage said group communication net and interface with said push-to-talk communication device, said device comprising:

a processor to convert information signals into packet data suitable for transmission over ~~the Internet~~ a distributed network, wherein said processor further comprises identification information, and wherein said processor updates its identification information when its current

identification information has or is about to change, and transmits its new identification information to said controller ~~over the Internet~~;

a transmitter to transmit packet data through a first channel to said controller over ~~the Internet~~ a distributed network;

a receiver to receive packet data through a second channel from said controller over ~~the Internet~~ a distributed network; and

a user-activated mechanism to activate said transmitter when a user of said communication device wishes to transmit said packet data to said controller.

26. (Currently Amended) In a push-to-talk communication device, a method for participating in a group communication net, said method comprising:

receiving information from a user of said push-to-talk communication device who wishes to transmit to said group communication net through a controller;

converting said information into packet data suitable for transmission over ~~the Internet~~ a distributed network; and

transmitting said packet data to said controller over ~~the Internet~~ a distributed network for transmitting to said group communication net.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 26, further comprising:
storing said packet data until said controller is ready to receive said packet data.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 26, further including:
determining whether said communication device has the authority to gain transmission privilege over another communication device such that said communication device may interrupt said another communication device having a lower priority level.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 26, further including:
receiving information from said controller regarding said group communications net.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 26, further including:
maintaining identification information for said communication device;

updating said identification information when said identification information has or is about to change; and
transmitting said updated identification information to said controller.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 26, further including:
determining whether said group communications net is in a dormant mode; and activating said controller to bring said group communications net out of said dormant mode.

32. (Currently Amended) In a push-to-talk communication device, computer-readable medium embodying a method for participating in a group communication net, said method comprising:

receiving information from a user of said push-to-talk communication device who wishes to transmit to said group communication net through a controller;

converting said information into packet data suitable for transmission over ~~the Internet~~ a distributed network; and

transmitting said packet data to said controller over ~~the Internet~~ a distributed network for transmitting to said group communication net.

33. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of Claim 32, wherein the method further includes:

storing said packet data until said controller is ready to receive said packet data.

34. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of Claim 32, wherein the method further includes:

determining whether said communication device has the authority to gain transmission privilege over another communication device such that said communication device may interrupt said another communication device having a lower priority level.

35. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of Claim 32, wherein the method further includes:

receiving information from said controller regarding said group communications net.

36. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of Claim 32, wherein the method further includes:

- maintaining identification information for said communication device;
- updating said identification information when said identification information has or is about to change; and
- transmitting said updated identification information to said controller.

37. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of Claim 32, wherein the method further includes:

- determining whether said group communications net is in a dormant mode; and
- activating said controller to bring said group communications net out of said dormant mode.

38. (Currently Amended) A communication device for participating in a group communication net, comprising:

- means for receiving information from a user of said push-to-talk communication device who wishes to transmit to said group communication net through a controller;

- means for converting said information into packet data suitable for transmission ~~the Internet~~ a distributed network; and

- means for transmitting said packet data to said controller over ~~the Internet~~ a distributed network for transmitting to said group communication net.

39. (Previously Presented) The communication device of Claim 38, further comprising:

- means for storing said packet data until said controller is ready to receive said packet data.

40. (Previously Presented) The communication device of Claim 38, further including:

means for determining whether said communication device has the authority to gain transmission privilege over another communication device such that said communication device may interrupt said another communication device having a lower priority level.

41. (Previously Presented) The communication device of Claim 38, further including:
means for receiving information from said controller regarding said group communications net.

42. (Previously Presented) The communication device of Claim 38, further including:
means for maintaining identification information for said communication device;
means for updating said identification information when said identification information has or is about to change; and
means for transmitting said updated identification information to said controller.

43. (Previously Presented) The communication device of Claim 38, further including:
means for determining whether said group communications net is in a dormant mode; and
means for activating said controller to bring said group communications net out of said dormant mode.